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OUR ORGANIZATION

AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

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The American Israel Numismatic Association is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of The State of New York. The primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby.

The Association sponsors major cultural/social/numismatic events such as national and regional conventions, study tours to Israel, publication of books, and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. Local chapters exist in many areas. Write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership and neither solicits nor accepts advertising. All articles published are the views and opinions of the authors and may or may not reflect the views and opinions of A.I.N.A.

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The President's Message by Moe Weinschel

Dear Members:

It is with great regret, due to conditions beyond our control, that we must cancel our March tour to Israel.



On a more positive note I am pleased to announce that A.I.N.A. will be participating at the A.N.A. convention, August 16th to 20th 1995, in Anaheim California. The Israel Government Coins & Medals are reserving table space on the "Mint Mile" and we will be at the convention with Mr. Shalom Peri, Managing Director. Among the special events planned is a combined meeting of AINA, INS club members and IGCMC subscribers. This get-together is to allow us to exchange ideas and information and at the same time enjoy a bit of convivial socializing. Invitations will go out to mail zip codes in a 75 mile radius. If you are further away, please try to attend. This is a great opportunity to come to California, to Disney in Anaheim and all the other visitor attractions and at the same time pursue your hobby and meet with fellow AINA members and collectors.

A heartfelt note of thanks to both our regular and life members who have made contributions to our organization beyond their dues structure so that AINA will be able to continue its work. Our income has decreased and our dues do not cover the printing and mailing costs of the SHEKEL. We sincerely do appreciate all the financial help we can receive.

Since we cannot always coincide mailing our new issues order forms with those of the IGCMC, we again ask our members to continue placing their orders for new issues with A.I.N.A. By using the IGCMC order form (or our order form) and mailing it to the A.I.N.A. New Issues Dept. P.O. BOX 836 Oakland Gardens, N.Y. 11364 A.I.N.A. earns a commission. Please mark A.I.N.A. and/or your INS club on the order form so proper credit can be given. A.I.N.A. and the clubs benefit. YOUR COST IS THE SAME.

Shalom

A handwritten signature in cursive ink that reads "Moe".

A.I.N.A. is a non-profit 501C Tax Exempt organization. Donations are fully tax deductible. Please remember a donation to A.I.N.A., when you pay your dues, and/or if you set up a legacy, thus giving A.I.N.A. the opportunity to be the vibrant voice of Israel Numismatics and continue the great accomplishments of the past.

The First John Hyrcanus: The Man and his Reign

by David Hendin
from the CELATOR

Now that it is universally recognized that the first coins issued by a Jewish ruler were struck under John Hyrcanus I. we ought to take a look at the man and his reign. He was the son of Simon the Maccabee, and nephew of the folk hero Judah Maccabee. He ruled from 134 B.C. until his death in 104 B.C.

According to Josephus, the first John Hyrcanus was endowed with three godly gifts - the temporal power, the dignity of a high priest, and the gift of prophecy. The real power of the young Jewish kingdom ended when he died after a 30-year reign.



COPPER COIN OF HYRCANUS.

Obverse: יהונתן הכהן הגרל והבר היהורי — "Johanan the High Priest and the 'Senate' of the Jews," within a laurel wreath.
Reverse: two cornucopiae; in the middle a poppy-head.

Indeed, according to Heinrich Graetz's famous *History of the Jews* "The reign of Hyrcanus is at once the pinnacle and the turning-point of this period. He not only carried on his father's work, but completed it. Under his predecessors Judaea was confined to a narrow space, and even within these bounds there were territories in the possession of foreign foes. Hyrcanus enlarged the boundaries to the north and to the south, and thus released the State from the external pressure that had been restricting its growth. His genius for war was aided by fortunate circumstances in bringing about these happy results."

Hyrcanus had the Hebrew name "Yehohanan" which appears on all of his coins. and it is generally believed that the governing council referred to on coins as "Hever ha'Yehudim" became known as the Sanhedrin during his reign. Apparently satisfied with the title "High Priest" for all of his life, he never assumed the title of king.

While his reign was successful by all accounts, it began and ended during difficult times. When he ascended, he was unable to avenge his father's death. Simon's murderer was Ptolemy (Hyrcanus' brother-in-law), and Hyrcanus managed to confine him in the fort Dagon, but every time Hyrcanus attempted to attack, Ptolemy subjected Hyrcanus'

mother to cruel tortures on the walls of the fort. Even though his mother was said to have borne the tortures heroically, encouraging her son to punish the murderer, Hyrcanus nevertheless was forced to lift his siege after several months. Ptolemy killed his mother-in-law anyway, and also another of Hyrcanus' brothers, and fled to Rabbath Ammon in 135 B.C.

Not long after Hyrcanus' reign began, Antiochus VII Sidetes and a large army marched on Jerusalem and besieged it. The Jews suffered from general lack of provisions but the Syrians were very short of water. After a full summer, facing the dangerous Parthians to his east, Antiochus entered into peace negotiations with Hyrcanus, who had bolstered his army with mercenaries, mainly Pisidians and Cilicians. (Hyrcanus was the first Hasmonean ruler to imitate the Syrians by hiring mercenaries to supplement the Jewish army.)

Antiochus first agreed to a seven day armistice, which took place during the Feast of Tabernacles. Indeed, he even sent bulls with gilded horns for sacrifice and spices for the Temple incense. In the ensuing treaty, Hyrcanus gave up weapons and paid tribute for a number of towns that were formerly Syrian. Antiochus in turn agreed not to suppress the Jewish religion and not to occupy Jerusalem. Hyrcanus also gave Antiochus hostages - including his own brother - and paid Antiochus 500 talents of silver. Josephus reports that Hyrcanus took the initial portion of the payment, 300 talents, from the treasure in King David's sepulcher.

Thus a vassal to the Syrian king, Hyrcanus marched on his behalf against the Parthians in 130 B.C. Antiochus Sidetes died in this battle, and his brother Demetrius II ascended to the Syrian throne for the second time, although he retained it only for a short time.

Hyrcanus took advantage of this weakness to expand his territories and to send an embassy to Rome. He captured Medaba in Transjordan. He also conquered the Samaritans who lived in Shechem and destroyed their temple on Mt. Gerezim.

Before finishing off the Samaritans, Hyrcanus marched against Idumaea, conquering the cities of Adora, near Hebron, and Marissa, near Beit Guvrin. He gave the Idumaeans (also called the Edomites) the choice of leaving the land or converting to Judaism. Most of them chose the latter, and thus became Jews "in every respect", according to Klausner.

This episode is said to have been the first example of forced conversion in Jewish history. Ironically, it later led to the downfall of the Hasmonean dynasty. The family of the Herodians were among the Idumaeans forcibly converted to Judaism, and it was their descendant, Herod I (the Great), who took the throne from Hyrcanus' descendant Antigonus Mattathais in 37 B.C.

The Samaritans still held their strongly fortified town of Samaria and they remained hostile to the Jews. Hyrcanus once again turned his armies against the Samaritans, sending his sons Antigonus and

Aristobulus to attack and besiege them. The Samaritans got some help from Antiochus IX, but Aristobulus routed him and chased him to Beth-Shean (Scythopolis). Next, Ptolemy Lathyrus was called to assist the Samaritans. In spite of the Syrian reinforcements the two sons of Hyrcanus successfully conquered Samaria and all of the Jezreel plain, as well as the town of Beit Shean. Meanwhile Hyrcanus was in Jerusalem, refortifying the walls and raising it to a level with its neighboring states in the eyes of Rome. His embassy to Rome requested the Senate to "send envoys to bring about the restitution of the places taken from the Jews by Antiochus and to estimate the value of the territory ruined during the war." The Senate granted this, and issued a decree that "King Antiochus, son of Antiochus, shall do no injury to the Jews, the allies of the Romans, and that the fortresses, harbors, territory and whatever else he may have taken from them shall be restored to them; and that it shall be lawful for them to export goods from their harbors and that no king or people exporting goods from the territory of the Jews or from their harbors shall be untaxed except only Ptolemy, king of Alexandria, because he is our ally and friend; and that the garrison in Jaffa shall be expelled, as they have requested."

During Hyrcanus' reign the sects of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes became well established. Hyrcanus was a faithful student of the Pharisees but broke with them late in his life and made the Sadducees' beliefs the basis of the law.

Klausner notes that Hyrcanus "died at a ripe old age, showered with honors, and a magnificent mausoleum was erected on his grave, which even at the time of the destruction of the Second Temple was known as 'the Tomb of Jonathan the Priest'. Not without reason was he favorably referred to even in the Talmud, although he had become a Sadducee."

Important Membership Notice

A.I.N.A. has recently mailed out follow up notices to those members who have not paid their 1995 membership dues. This will be the last issue those members will receive unless their dues are received.

Medicine in Israel by Edward Schuman

The ancient Hebrews regarded health and disease as emanating from the same divine source. The Lord said through his servant Moses "I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal" (Deut. XXXII. 39) Therefore those who minister the health of their people are regarded as the messengers of God, as the executors of His will.

Among the Jews, unlike the primitive nations, the priests did not monopolize the art and science of healing. The Bible mentions not a single instance where a priest performed the functions of a physician, but the art of healing was occasionally practiced by the Prophets.

Maimonides who was born in Cordova, left Spain in 1166 on account of the disfranchisement of the Jews. He settled in Egypt where he became the court physician to the sultan Saladin. During the medieval period, despite the promulgated decrees they forced on the Jews, Christian Popes, and crowned royalty often had Jewish physicians in attendance. Though Jewish physicians were not allowed to practice in France, their skill was so well known that during a severe illness, King Francis I (1515-1547) asked the Emperor of Germany for a Jewish physician. When one did arrived, the King, thinking he was a Christian, sent him back. The King then asked the Sultan of Turkey for another Jewish physician who cured him.

The French revolution brought about changes in the status of Jewish physicians. Jews were permitted to attend universities and to practice their professions as they were admitted to citizenship in most European countries.

The first Jewish physician in Palestine, Simon Fraenkel, was sent to Jerusalem in 1843 by Moses Montefiore. Menahem Stein was the first Jewish doctor in Jaffa (1882), Hillel Yaffe the first in Haifa in 1890. Dr. Chaim Chissim, who was active in the Bilu organization, and a founder of Tel-Aviv, was a physician, together with Bathsheba Yunis in this first all Jewish city. Dr. Leib Pashkovsky was the first surgeon to settle in Palestine (1906).

Dr. Moshe Wallach was sent from Germany in the later part of the 19th century and founded Shaare Zedak Hospital on Jaffa Road, in Jerusalem, to provide health care for the destitute poor and needy. A.I.N.A. played a small part in the fund raising for the new Shaare Zedak Hospital which is acknowledged with a bronze plate affixed to the wall along side a room dedicated by our organization. The new hospital, which has served as the primary military hospital during several wars, is known throughout the world today as a hospital with a heart.

The Daughters of Zion Hadassah was an early Zionist women's group in the United States. Henrietta Szold joined this organization in 1907. On her sojourn to Palestine in 1910, she found a very high infant mortality and a crying need for nursing services in all areas.

In 1910 she urged this group to sponsor health care work among the Jews in Palestine. The turn of the century front cover picture records the three nurses Henrietta Szold's circle sent to Jerusalem in 1913 to establish a health station. American Daughters of Zion later changed its name to Hadassah and became the largest Zionist membership organization in the world. The great Hadassah Medical complex on Mt. Scopus has built, staffed and funded through this world renown medical facility. Noted Jewish artist Marc Chagall designed the famous stained glass windows of the chapel.

By 1912, there were 35 Jewish doctors in Palestine and a medical association was founded in Tel- Aviv. During that time the majority of the doctors had been trained in ophthalmology, dermatology, and parasitology which were then the country's prevalent diseases.

Although public health remained a major preoccupation, increased control of malaria, rabies, trachoma, and other infectious diseases allowed more time for other specialties. Chaim Sheba, the Surgeon-General of the Israel Army, helped raise the standard of his specialty and its teaching. Important contributions were made by Moshe Rachmilewitz in hematology, Karl Braun in cardiology, Lipman Halpern in neurology, and others in their respective fields.

The number of Jewish physicians in Israel increased sharply after the Balfour Declaration in 1917, and the pace of their immigration accelerated with each wave of persecution in Europe. Immigration of eminent scientists during the 1930s and 1940s, the expansion of hospitals, the founding of the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical School in 1949, the Weizmann Institute in 1944 and of the Tel Aviv Medical School in 1965, have advanced medical research and made it an integral part of Israel medicine.

As a result, the number of physicians per capita had become the highest in the world, to be reduced only recently by the arrival of new immigrants. Today, Israeli medicine ranks among the highest among all the nations in the world. Her surgeons and specialists are often called upon world-wide. Israel's medical assistance to third world countries have brought accolades and honor to the country.

Israel's 47th Anniversary coins are dedicated to Medicine in Israel. The unique coin motifs display representations of DNA molecules, a test tube, syringe, and the inner chambers of the heart. Also shown is a physician's logo curled around the base of a stylized menorah.



WOMEN ON ISRAELI BANKNOTES

By Shmuel Aviezer

50.4% is the 1992 figure that indicates the percentage of women in the population of Israel; a little more than half, yet women's part in the state's leadership and in the high echelons of the Israeli society, past and present, are by far smaller than their numerical prominence. Subsequently, there results in only a narrow circle of women worthy to join the gallery of persons who earned celebrity that qualifies them as candidates for commemoration on Israeli banknotes. Yet, women chosen to adorn Israeli banknotes, while giving credit to their individual glorious achievements, bestow a mantle of magnificence on all Israeli women.

Deciding who appears on a banknote is the task delegated by the Governor of the Bank of Israel to a special Public Committee for Planning Banknotes and Coins. The first composition of this committee appointed in 1955 by the then Governor of the Bank, Mr. David Horowitz, included Mr. E. Hofien, chairman of the Board of Bank Leumi Le Israel; Prof. Yigael Yadin, former chief of staff of Israel Defense Forces and noted archeologist; Mr. Akiba Govrin, member of Knesset; Dr. Leo Kadman, chairman of the Israeli Numismatic Society; Mr. Mordechai Narkiss, Director, Bezalel School of Arts; and Mr. Gerd Rothschild, graphic artist.

Mr. Hofien, chairman, explained to the members of the committee that the printers of banknotes had recommended to choose portraits to appear on the new series of banknotes after the first series, which displayed landscapes and surrealistic drawings, had been severely lambasted by the public. Moreover, any slight change on an effigy of a known personality could be easily perceived; thus, there is more security against forgery when portraits are depicted. Nevertheless, in view of the objection of the Minister of Finance to commemorate known personalities, Mr. Hofien suggested to portray allegoric figures that typify Israeli agriculture, seafaring, science etc.

While many committee members supported the idea, Dr. Y. Yadin emphasized the necessity that an Israeli banknote should represent specific Israeli symbols, historic and actual. The agreed solution was that one side of the note should depict historic items while the other side should be devoted to Israel's present and its ramifications.

In the following review, emphasis is put on the choice of women on banknotes, sidestepping other particulars thereof. In line with the principle adopted, the committee decided to portray on the green half pound banknote of the 2nd series the likeness of a woman-soldier on the background of cultivated land to represent agriculture.

Governor David Horowitz, hearing of the committee's decision, voiced his reservation that an Israeli banknote representing agriculture lacks Israel's characteristic agricultural product - the oranges.

The committee immediately improved its choice by allowing the soldier to carry a basket of oranges! Prof. Yadin commented, "a woman soldier with a basket of oranges looks very odd!"

The idea of the committee to portray a woman-soldier on a banknote came in order to symbolize agriculture, women and the Israeli Army in one expression. The graphic artist who designed the banknote Mr. Gabriel Shamir, took pictures of five woman-soldiers, who were hand-picked by the Ministry of Defense for a "security mission". After tens of sketches, Mr. Shamir succeeded to create the image of a real Sabra girl as he saw it. The final portrait did not illustrate any of the five soldiers, yet when the banknote appeared in circulation, on October 15, 1959, every one of them saw her image there!



But that was not the important reaction. An angry furor immediately erupted in the religious circles. "Hamodia", the "Agudat Israel" mouthpiece, unleashed a vehement criticism on the decision to portray an "arrogant woman-soldier" on the half-pound banknote. "Instead of depicting historic figures abundant in the Jewish Nation", commented "Hamodia" on October 18, 1959, "came the vulgar provocation of the feelings of hundreds of thousands of citizens who oppose the drafting of women into the army and treat it as a rabbinical ban ... This picture arouses revulsion in every religious Jew who abides by the rabbinical dictates that prohibits woman recruitment to the army. ... How can you ask them to put this banknote in their pockets and enter the synagogue to pray?"

The day after, "The Jerusalem Post" quipped: "Then there is the girl with the un-Israeli figure who is certainly worth only half a pound compared to the scientist's ten. What on earth is she doing, wearing her best army uniform to go picking oranges? Her face will pass but didn't they know that every self-respecting Israel girl has either a pony-tail or her hair on her shoulders in a mess, except for the odd few who put it up? What hairdresser gave her that old fashioned bobbed haircut? She's 25 years out of date."

Anyway, the lifetime of this banknote was relatively short, about 4 years. On September 12, 1963 it was replaced by a coin of the same denomination.

Within the same series, the second issued by the Bank of Israel, a banknote denominated in fifty Israeli pounds was issued. On the front two pioneers were depicted, a "Halutz" and a "Halutza". This is the second instance when a female face was illustrated on an Israeli banknote. The theme of the note was the blooming of the Negev by the Israeli youth.

Governor Horowitz was not satisfied when he was shown the initial portrayal of the young woman, believing it to be far from being beautiful. He gave instructions to apply the needed modifications in order to preclude the impression that Israeli women are unbecoming. He personally visited the printers in September 1959 to ensure that the final drawing was impressive.



This banknote, which was introduced into circulation in December 1960, was gradually replaced, beginning January 1972, by a banknote of the 3rd series, that displayed the effigy of Dr. Chaim Weizman, the first President of Israel.

The third series of the Bank of Israel issue, in circulation between 1969 and 1972, did not depict a woman on any of its denominations. That was apparently one of the reasons when the Public Committee convened in late 1972 to choose the personalities which would appear on the banknotes of the fourth series, it was unanimously agreed that one of these personalities should be a woman.

Everyone thought that the choosing of Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah Medical Organization and mother of Youth Aliya, that saved Jewish children during the Holocaust, was natural and unequivocal. The drawing was prepared by Israeli artist Paul Kor. The magnificent engraving, the work of Sam Hertz, noted Jewish Dutch engraver.

5

חמש
ליירות
ישראליות



סמל 80
נגידת בנק
המונאה הלאומית
ישוב ראש
נגידת בנק
1973
חותם מגן

בנק ישראל

When the banknote was put into circulation in March 3, 1976, the public reaction was apathetic. "Public indifference to the issue of a banknote or a coin", said an expert on currency in the Belgian Central Bank, "is a mark of success, as criticism is never late to come, while compliments are rarely given."

Mr. Moshe Sanbar, then Governor of the Bank of Israel, handed over to the Hadassah Organization in the United States 500 Henrietta Szold banknotes to be presented to the donors who contributed to the reconstruction of the Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem. To render a personal touch, Mr. Sanbar appended his signature on these banknotes after ascertaining that this step does not contradict the law. This banknote was replaced by a coin of the same denomination IL 5, on September 21, 1978.

In the wake of the soaring inflation in the first half of the eighties, more banknotes of higher values had to be issued. The Public Committee generally chose ample time in advance one or more personalities for depiction on banknotes without specifying beforehand the precise denomination on which certain personality appears, leaving this matter to be decided by the Bank of Israel as necessity arises.

Mrs. Golda Meir was nominated in this category in January 1981, as a magnificent woman and an indefatigable leader, alongside Messrs. Levi Eshkol and Moshe Sharett.

Obviously, one positive side of the high inflation then hovering over Israel was the possibility to commemorate more personalities on new banknotes than customary in a regular series (a regular series is composed of 4 - 5 notes while the sheqel series, started in February 1980, reached the number of 9 banknotes until the currency reform of September 1985).

The initial value for the Golda Meir banknote was 2,000 sheqalim. Complimentary subjects put forth before the graphic artists in the competition for the design of this banknote were graphic expression of Mrs. Meir's affinity to the Jewish world, incorporating the front of the Moscow Synagogue where she was applauded by the Jewish Community in Moscow when she came as the first Israeli Ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1949 and an expression of the Israeli assistance to African countries of which Mrs. Meir was the proponent.

The graphic artists found that a description of the relations with Africa is hard row to hoe. Appearance of African symbols or images on an Israeli banknote seemed odd. Therefore the Committee guided the artist, Mr. Asher Kalderon, to emphasize Golda's bonds with Russian Jewry. Thus, the historic picture featuring the Russian Jews gathering around Mrs. Meir in front of the Moscow great synagogue was embodied in the back of the banknote. The motto "Let my people go" appears in letters of different sizes in a repetitive rendition.



When the banknote was put into circulation on November 27, 1984, Mrs. Sarah Rahavi, Mrs. Meir's daughter, revealed that she and her husband were among the congregation then assembled in front of the Moscow synagogue. The picture was taken by a Soviet citizen. The Russian authorities did not allow a big reception to the first Israeli delegate in Russia to be held inside the synagogue. That is why thousands of Jews waited outside to enthusiastically greet Mrs. Meir in a rare show of spontaneous feelings of Jewish solidarity.

As is known, the face value of the note was changed from 2,000 to 10,000 sheqalim in the process of its preparation to reconcile the denomination to the rising inflation. This is the highest figure ever printed on an Israeli banknote. With the advent of the new shekel, on September 4, 1985, this denomination was stripped of three zeroes and became 10 New Sheqalim, as is currently in circulation in Israel. But, in order to save costs and facilitate daily use, this banknote is scheduled to be replaced by a coin in early 1995.



The NIS 200 banknote, the highest Israeli denomination was introduced into circulation on February 16, 1992. Its leading theme is education. The girl portrayed on the back of the note is anonymous, representing children of grade A who are beginning to learn to read and write. Indeed she is not yet a woman in full sense, but her appearance on a recent Israeli banknote invariably adds honor and prominence to womankind.

Editor's Note: Shmuel Aviezer, the author of this and numerous other currency articles, is the former Head of the Currency Supply Department of the Bank of Israel. His reminiscences of these early events are extremely interesting. I wish to acknowledge in print my appreciation for his illustrious work.

The St. Petersburg Synagogue by Steve Volis

Saint Petersburg, founded by Peter the Great (PETER I. EMPEROR OF RUSSIA) in 1703, is Russia's second-largest city. From 1924 to 1991, when the city's residents voted to restore its former name, it was known as Leningrad. The city is situated in the delta of the Neva River on the Gulf of Finland. The population of the city including its suburbs is 5.8 million (1989). The city's population consists almost entirely of ethnic Russians, with the largest minorities being Jews (4%) and Ukrainians (2.5%).

One of the world's great cities, Saint Petersburg flourished as the center of the Russian economy and culture while serving as the capital of the Russian Empire. Its role in science, education, and innovation was only slightly diminished after the nation's seat of government was moved back to Moscow in 1918. Often regarded as one of the world's most beautiful cities, Saint Petersburg is distinguished by its sumptuous public buildings, designed for the tsars by renowned Italian architects. Among the most prominent structures is the State Hermitage Museum, founded in 1754, one of the world's great art museums, which is housed in the tsar's former Winter Palace.

The Great Synagogue of Saint Petersburg, called the Big Synagogue, is an imposing Moorish-style stone building which was erected in 1893 and remains as one of the largest synagogues in Europe. The synagogue proper seats about thirteen hundred, but with the huge women's gallery and five smaller chapels, all linked by a modern loudspeaker system, more than four thousand can be accommodated. During the High Holy Days the loudspeaker system also reaches outdoors because the street in front of the synagogue is thronged with worshipers.

There is an impressive entrance gate of wrought iron inscribed with Hebrew mottoes. Beyond the gate is a large lobby, with stairways on either side leading to the women's gallery. The Ark is under a canopy, above which is a neon-lighted Star of David. The two large Menorahs flanking the Ark are also neon-lighted. On the lower level are the chapels, one of which contains a permanent sukkah; a sumptuous wedding hall; a library containing thousands of Hebrew books, sets of the Talmud and a small collection of Torah Scrolls; a ritual bath for women; and a ritual slaughterhouse for preparing kosher meat. There is also a smaller synagogue on the main floor.

During the siege of the city in World War II, when most of the civilian populace was evacuated, one of the synagogue officials risked his life when he moved into the abandoned synagogue and occupied it until the siege was lifted. Under Soviet law, the title to evacuated and abandoned buildings reverts to the government. The official's heroism avoided the probability that the synagogue would have been forfeited to the communist Russian government when the war had ended.

Today the synagogue has again become a magnet for St. Petersburg Jewish renaissance under the dynamic leadership of Rabbi Mendel Pewzner, a Brooklyn born rabbi, who emigrated to Russia with his wife and infant son about two years ago.

For more than seven decades, under Soviet dominated rule, Russian Jews stayed away from their architectural wonder in the heart of Leningrad, the second largest synagogue in Europe. Now the Saint Petersburg synagogue is teeming with activities that would have landed participants in Siberian gulags during the Soviet era. During these many years, the only congregants were the pious and elderly and those who had nothing to loose.

In addition to regular religious services, the synagogue has become a spirited center for religion, education and charity. A Hebrew school now serves 250 Jewish children. A yeshiva has been organized which currently has an enrollment of 25 rabbinical students from around the world, a kindergarten serving 60 Russian children and a senior citizen center that provides regular kosher meals for 200 of St. Petersburg's hard-strapped elderly poor Jews.

It has not been an easy task to accomplish the crafting of a Jewish renaissance in Saint Petersburg. Chronic poverty, run away inflation, ubiquitous crime not to mention the near impossibility of obtaining kosher food. If you identify yourself as being a Jew in public, you become a target. As a result, only a small percentage of the Jewish population is willing to risk public involvement in Jewish activities out of the approximately 120,000 Jews in Saint Petersburg today.

A medal issued in 1993 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the synagogue has surfaced. On the obverse is shown the front of the synagogue, with the large Star of David above the entrance door. The dates 1893 - 1993 are incuse on either side of the dome. There is an inscription in Russian, Hebrew and English reading "The Big Synagogue". The theme for the reverse side is the eternal flame mounted on a high pedestal and a lighted menorah, with "St. Petersburg" written in Russian, Hebrew and English.



150th Anniversary of New Jersey's Abolishing Religious Restrictions

by Allison Imbriaco

In 1691, William Penn visited the Quaker colony in West Jersey and described the Indians living there as closely resembling Jews. Penn's report that the Indians were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel became the basis, years later, for a book on this subject by Elias Boudinot, a Revolutionary patriot who served as the president of the Continental Congress.

Until 1694, New Jersey was an un-named section of New England. West Jersey and East Jersey united in 1702 to form the Crown Colony of New Jersey.

For Jews and other non-Protestants, the year 1994 marked a significant anniversary in New Jersey. It was 150 years ago that the Garden State ratified its second state constitution, this one defining freedom of religion for the state's residents in no uncertain terms. Where the state's first constitution, rushed through the state's legislative body in August 1776 stated that office holders must be Protestant, the second constitution abolished any such religious qualification for public office. Submitted for New Jersey voter approval in August 1844, the state's second constitution affirms in paragraph four of Article I that "no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust; and no person shall be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of his religious principles."

In light of the minuscule non-Protestant population in the state at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of 1844, the total support for the removal of the religious restraint on office holding is particularly admirable. It reflects a very strong commitment...to the Jacksonian democratic ideals... which were very much in command at that time. There appears to have been little or no debate about the removal of the religious restriction on office holding.

There was, however, strong opposition to striking a provision of the 1776 constitution that said only property owners could vote or be elected to office. That change barely passed the senate.

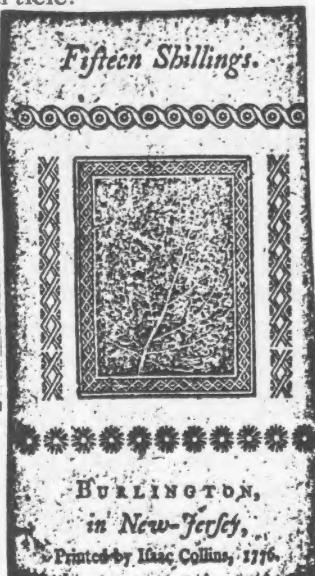
Although New Jersey had emphasized religious toleration from the 1660's on, as a way to get settlers to come to the state, such tolerance, until the middle of the 19th century, referred to differences among the Protestant faiths. When the 1844 constitution was ratified, the Jewish population was barely visible. The state's first synagogue was organized in Paterson in 1847, with the second one, Newark's Temple B'nai Jeshurun, following in 1849. Despite the earlier constitution's religious qualification, there were Jewish office holders in New Jersey prior to the 1844 revisions. A Jewish man, David Naar, was an Essex County delegate to the convention that developed the 1844 constitution, serving on its bill of rights committee.

A booklet, "The Essex Story," published in 1955 by the Jewish Education Society of Essex County, described David Naar as the descendant of Sephardi Jews who owned a farm near Elizabeth, then part of Essex County. David Naar was the founder of State Teachers College, served as mayor of Elizabeth, presiding judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Essex County, and, for a time U.S. consul at St. Thomas, in the West Indies.

Naar was not the only Jew to hold public office prior to the 1844 constitutional change. As early as 1722, Daniel Nunez, a merchant in Piscataway Township, served as a Justice of the County Quarter Sessions Court and as the town clerk, treasurer and tax collector.

Compared with other states, though, N.J. was relatively late in abolishing religious qualifications. However, the state was thorough in its definition of religious freedom. In fact, the state constitution defines religious freedom more specifically than does the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Article I of the U.S. Bill of Rights protects religious freedom with the succinct provision that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Expanding on this provision, the third paragraph of Article I of the New Jersey constitution states that "No person shall be deprived of the inestimable privilege of worshipping Almighty God in a manner agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience;..." Nor shall any person be obliged to pay tithes, taxes or other rates for building or repairing any church or churches, place or places of worship."

Along with the other original 13 colonies, New Jersey issued Continental Currency paper money and a series of copper coins which circulated prior the formation of the United States. Several of these items are the numismatic illustrations for this article.



A Kaddish for Singer by Charles Fenyvesi

Isaac Bashevis Singer, the Nobel laureate who died in Miami Beach in July at the age of 87, lived in the *yenne welt* of ghosts and spirits-unhappy *dybbukim* and mischievous, often wicked, *sheydim*. (*Yenne welt* (other world), *dybbukim* (wandering souls), *sheydim* (devils).

His novels and short stories offered his unmistakably personal mixture of the humdrum and the metaphysical that critics may one day call Singer-esque. He excelled both as a realist and as a fabulist. Perhaps in style and content the artist closest to him was the Jewish-French painter Marc Chagall, born in Vitebsk, Russia. Singer admired Balzac and Tolstoy, and said that he could never measure up to his older brother Joseph, who followed the European school of academic realism as exemplified by Thomas Mann. Isaac looked as baffled as a child seeing a treasured vase smashed into smithereens when he was once told that his brother Joseph lacked the fire he had.

Born in Poland in 1904, I. B. Singer escaped the Holocaust by immigrating to the United States in 1935. He eked out a precarious living as a Yiddish writer, stubbornly rejecting advice to switch to English. He was discovered by the likes of Esquire and Playboy and started to become a celebrity in the late 1950s, after Saul Bellow translated into English one of his greatest novellas, *Gimpel the Fool*.

Nevertheless, to the end of his life, Singer remained a visitor to these shores—a storytelling guest living off his memories of another land and another time. Though by the 1970s he did occasionally venture into writing about contemporary Jews in America, his finest works depicted Polish Jews—tormented rabbis and light-hearted thieves adulterers and innocents—who battled demons from past centuries. He wrote in an earthy Yiddish that many of his readers complained was too simplistic and even coarse, and he lectured in an easygoing, graceful, witty English.

A frail, slender figure impeccable in a dark suit, Singer frankly enjoyed the limelight and the lectern. His complexion suggested the texture of an old parchment, but his blue eyes sparkled and his hands and fingers playfully circled and twisted in the air. He was in his 70s when women half his age could still sense his sensual appetite—a recurrent and controversial aspect of the men and women peopling his books. On the other hand men often found themselves invited by him into conversations on subjects such as the immortality of the soul.

In suburban American homes and in New York and Miami cafeterias, Singer never gave up his search for sparks of long-lost souls from Jewish Poland. Modest to the point of self-effacement, he was an avid listener, and he was not above eavesdropping. He believed in dreams and reincarnation the axiomatic way merchants believe in the laws of supply and demand. "Please, tell me a story," he was in



the habit of coaxing even casual acquaintances, and to have dinner with Singer meant an invitation to enter his fiction and to try on the roles he prompted, ever so gently and craftily.

The son and grandson of rabbis and a student of a renowned talmudic academy of Poland, he did not follow the rules and practices of traditional Judaism. He bowed only to nature, which he equated with God, and, like the ancient Greeks, he invested birches and crows, snowfalls and thunderstorms with supernatural powers.

Singer was a sly magician who fielded questions from his earnestly questing audiences with more questions, recommending skepticism and rationality. He suggested that people discount what they think may be messages from another world and follow instead what their senses tell them in the full light of the day. But his writing told another story: "Whatever doesn't really happen is dreamed at night," said his character, Gimpel the Fool, one of Singer's many personas who liked to say, with a sigh "What's the use of not believing?"

In his "The Spinoza of Market Street," Singer characterized writers like himself, "dreamers who dream while awake, call back the shadows of the past and braid nets from unspun threads." He always claimed that he had never seen a ghost or a demon—"and how I regret it!" he used to cry out aloud—and he tried to fool the world into believing that all he wrote was "only literature," which he defined in one conversation "as dreams, only dreams, nothing more, and of the thinnest of fabrics."

Will we ever see his like again? In one of his most memorable novels, "The Magician of Lublin" (Noonday, 1960), Singer declared through his hero, Yasha, who was part thief and part saint: "Only the body dies. The soul lives on. The body is like a garment. When a garment becomes soiled or threadbare, it is cast aside."

The numismatic illustration is the Isaac B. Singer medal, designed by Robert Russin for the Magnus Museum's Jewish American Hall of Fame medal series.

ISRAEL'S & Money Medals UPDATE

by Dr. Gary P. Laroff

Update #10: State Medals 1991 - early 1993

This update to *Israel's Money and Medals* continues the State Medals Series where it left off on page SM-122 with the 1991 "Marc Chagall" issues, SM-137. The following pages, when removed or photocopied and inserted in the book after page SM-122, bring the state medals current up through page SM-130 and the 1993 "Shavuot" issue, number SM-151. In the next update we will bring the State Medals essentially up to date.

A source of many readers' letters and phone calls has been the apparent gap between the State Medals "SM" pages as recently published (up through page SM-122) and the pages numbered SM-141 to SM-148 for 1992 issues, as published in *The Shekel* Vol. XXVII No. 2, March-April 1994 for issues SM-141 to SM-148. These latter pages were temporary and a space filler and get replaced with the pages in this issue of *The Shekel*. You may now discard the temporary pages SM-141 to SM-148.

State medals are official medals issued exclusively by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation (IGCMC). They differ in principle from Commissioned medals in which a private or public organization ("commissioning agency") has officially commissioned the IGCMC to strike medals for ceremonial distribution. Often, these latter medals have not been made available for distribution to collectors.

Israel's Money and Medals Updates are researched and written by Dr. Gary P. Laroff, who is working closely with Sylvia H. Magnus on this effort. The content of the checklist tables are further reviewed for accuracy by Ya'akov Mead, J. J. Van Grover and others. The current method of providing eight pages in the center of *The Shekel* makes them easily removed. The copyright to the book *Israel's Money and Medals* is held by Arnold H. Kagan. The format, content and tables in *Israel's Money and Medals Updates* are copyright © 1995 Gary P. Laroff.

Correspondence on this column should be addressed to the author: Dr. Gary P. Laroff, P. O. Box 39, Tualatin, OR 97062-0039.

"Everlasting Covenant," SM-138



A symbol of the pact between G-d and Noah, the rainbow is a message to the Earth. A small protusion at the center of the medal enables rotation of the medal on a smooth surface, until it seems to float on air. The spinning motion expresses perpetual motion of the world and flux which are the essence of life.

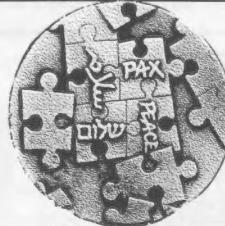
Obverse: Colored rainbow on a spiral background, "Everlasting Covenant" in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: Map of the world with Jerusalem at its center. "The world is built by love" and signature of Yaakov Agam in Hebrew and English.

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: Yaakov Agam. Mints: tombac and 50mm silver: Kretschmer; gold and 26 mm silver: Government Mint Jerusalem.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-138	1519-4597	1991	tombac	59	98	<4,000	\$25.00
	SM-138a	2519-4264	1991	Ag/999	26	10	<2,000*	\$41.00
	SM-138b	2519-4507	1991	Ag/999	50	60	<2,000	\$83.00
	SM-138c	3519-4224	1991	Au/585	22	7	<3,000*	\$146.00
	SM-138d	3519-4305	1991	Au/750	30	15	<1,500	\$292.00

Direct Peace Negotiations - Neighbors SM-139



"Peace" appears on the medal in several languages. The medal is an expression of Israel's hopes, dreams and prayers for a better, limited and peaceful world. Israel looks to the future with great hope to the ushering in of a new era, in which there will be no more war.

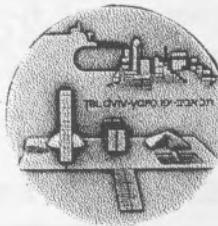
Obverse: "Direct Peace negotiations between Israel and its neighbors" in Hebrew and English. On the left a branch of the olive tree.

Reverse: Pieces of a jigsaw puzzle which are beginning to find their place. "Peace" in Hebrew, English, Arabic and Latin.

Edge: "State of Israel, Madrid 30.10.91" and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: Obverse: Gideon Keich, Reverse: Nathan Karp. Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan. Mints: gold: The Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver and tombac: Moshe Hecht, Tel-Aviv.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-139	1519-7595	1991	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-139a	2519-7505	1991	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-139b	3519-7303	1991	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

New York and Tel-Aviv, SM-140



The "New York and Tel-Aviv" medal is a mark of the special bond between the two cities. Although far from each other and in some ways, very different, these two cities have a lot in common. Both were founded by pioneering immigrants and both today are thriving modern cities. Americans and Israelis who want to start a business, make a deal, open an art gallery, publish a book, or join a symphony go to New York or Tel-Aviv.

New York side: Skyline of New York and Statue of Liberty. "New York City" in English and Hebrew.

Tel Aviv side: Dani Karavan's "Kikar Levana" (White Square). "Tel Aviv-Yafo," in Hebrew and English. The coastline and buildings of Tel-Aviv.

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: New York side: Mark Freeman of New York; Tel-Aviv side: Asher Kalderon, based on motifs by Dani Karavan. Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan. Mints: Silver and tombac: Moshe Hecht, Tel-Aviv; Gold: Government Mint, Jerusalem.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-140	1519-6701	1991	tombac	70	140	<5,000	\$13.50
	SM-140a	2519-6509	1991	Ag/999	50	60	<3,500	\$54.00
	SM-140b	3519-6357	1991	Au/916.6	35	30	<1,500	\$449.00

In Memory of the Concentration and Death Camps, SM-141



In January 1942 the Nazis made their final plans to solve the "Jewish Problem." After this, came the darkest and most horrific period in the history of mankind. Death camps were erected and European Jewry was brought to the gas chambers. The greatest tragedy of the Jewish people — the Holocaust — began, and only after the war, was the true extent of the horror to be discovered. Fifty years have elapsed since then, but the bitter memories of six million innocent people, inhumanely and untimely put to death, are still vivid. We will never forget, never let it happen again.

Obverse: The figure of six children at Auschwitz, symbolizing the six million victims. "In Memory of the Concentration and Death Camps 1942-1992" in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: An electrified barbed wire fence, a watch tower against a background of shacks and rising smoke. In Hebrew and English: the names of the six death camps: "Treblinka, Chelmno, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Maidanek, Sobibor, Belzec."

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: obverse: Gabi Neumann; reverse: Abraham Pat. Mints: Gold medal — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver and tombac — Kretschmer, Jerusalem.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-141	1519-8703	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-141a	2519-8501	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-141b	3519-8309	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

500th Memorial of Expulsion of Jews from Spain, SM-142



Before the expulsion, Spanish Jewry was culturally one of the richest and most flourishing of Jewish Communities. With the start of the Inquisition in 1492, the monarchs of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, signed the edict forcing the Jews to convert or leave the country. The Jews expelled from Spain numbered about 200,000. This medal is a tribute to the immense spiritual and intellectual legacy of this unique Jewry, its bravery in the face of expulsion, and its tenacious belief in the G-d of Israel.

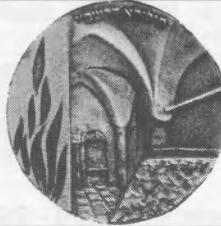
Obverse: Map of the expulsion showing the directions in which the Jews left Spain and a typical ship of the period. "I will not die, but live...." in Hebrew and English and "500 Years since the Expulsion from Spain 1492-1992" in Hebrew and Spanish.

Reverse: Wall of Synagogue of Shmuel Halevi Abulafia of Toledo, from the 14th century, with inscribed psalms. Jews in traditional dress of Spain during the Moslem rule.

Edge: "The State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: obverse: Natan Karp; reverse: Galia and Ilan Elsen. Mints: Kretschmer, Jerusalem.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-142	1519-5593	1992	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-142a	2519-5503	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-142b	3519-5246	1992	Au/916.6	35	30		\$449.00
	SM-142c	3519-5351	1992	Au/750	24	10.36		\$170.00

Lag B'Omer, SM-143



The fourth in a series of Jewish Holidays medals. "Lag B'Omer" celebrates the great teacher of Mishna, R. Shimeon Bar Yochai and has come to symbolize the light of the Jewish Mystics. It is a happy day and traditionally one on which weddings and other joyful events take place.

"Lag B'Omer" is the thirty third day of the Omer, the 49-day period of counting which begins on the second night of Passover and ends with Shavuot.

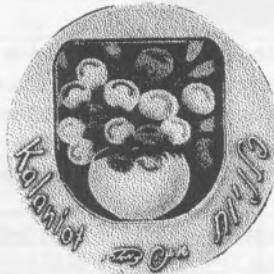
Obverse: Stylized bonfire culminating in seven flames, a wedding ring and "Lag B'Omer" in English and Hebrew.

Reverse: The Tomb of Rabbi Bar Yochai in its hall, in front of an arched pillar. Flames of a bonfire. "R. Simeon Bar Yochai celebrations" in Hebrew.

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Gold: milled. Design: obverse: Ehud Shafrir; reverse: Ruben Nutels. Mints: Gold and tombac medals — Kretschmer; silver — Israel Government Mint, Jerusalem.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-143	1520-0592	1992	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-143a	2520-0374	1992	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-143b	3520-0180	1992	Au/750	18	4.4		\$99.00

Shoshana Damari - "Kalaniot," SM-144



Spring in Israel is marked by the gorgeous beds of scarlet-headed poppies, which sway in the breeze as if in rhythm to Shoshana Damari's song, "Kalaniot." Uniquely, she has transformed song into painting and her beautiful artwork, Kalaniot (Poppies). The lively, colorful strokes of her brush depict images described in her songs. Being doubly talented, Shoshana has been able to create a bond between song and painting, and has made it possible "to touch the song."

Obverse: In the center, a miniature color lithograph of Shoshana Damari's painting. Below, the word "Kalaniot" in Hebrew and English and the signature of the artist in Hebrew.

Reverse: A little shepherdess, with two sheep. "The Little Shepherdess" in English and Hebrew, the signature of the artist, "Shoshana" in English.

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: Reproduction of Shoshana's creations: Ronit Berson; Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan. Mints: Gold 22mm and silver 26mm: Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver 50 mm. and tombac: M. Hecht; silver 50 mm: Kretschmer. Lithography: David Tamerin.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-144	1519-9597	1992	tombac	59	98	<5,000	\$25.00
	SM-144a	2519-9507	1992	Ag/999	50	60	<2,000	\$83.00
	SM-144b	2519-9264	1992	Ag/999	26	10	<2,500*	\$41.00
	SM-144c	3519-9224	1992	Au/585	22	7	<3,000*	\$146.00

Jerusalem Reunited - 25 Years, 1967-1992, SM-145

This beautiful medal highlights two central themes associated with Jerusalem. The obverse depicts the City of Jerusalem as the City of Peace. The reverse recites the prayer "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," which for centuries symbolized the centrality of Jerusalem for the Jews in

exile throughout the world. With the reunification of Jerusalem 25 years before, Jerusalem had once again assumed its rightful place as the eternal capital of the Jewish State.

Obverse: Jerusalem as the "City of Peace", outlined by the dove of peace. The landmarks on the medal include, the Western Wall, Tower of David, the Knesset, Dome of the Rock, etc. "Jerusalem Reunited" and the date "1967-1992" in English and Hebrew.



Reverse: Menorah, the emblem of the reunification. "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem" in Hebrew, English and Arabic.

Edge: "State of Israel" in English and Hebrew and the Menorah. Serial number and metal fineness. Design: obverse: Rachel Timor; reverse: Ruben Nutels. Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan. Mints: Gold: Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver: Kretschmer, Jerusalem; tombac: Moshe Hecht, Tel-Aviv.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-145	1520-1700	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-145a	2520-1508	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-145b	3520-1306	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

The Supreme Court, SM-146



The Supreme Court is the highest judicial forum in the State of Israel. Together with the legislative arm (the Knesset) and the executive arm (the Government), the Judiciary — and the Supreme Court at its head — stands at one of the apexes of the triangle of the three authorities of the regime. This medal celebrates the opening of the new Supreme Court Building. The foundation stone was laid on April 29, 1987 and the building was opened in a state ceremony in November 1992.

Obverse: Hallway in Supreme Court Building. At its exit, a star of David symbolizing the Israeli law and righteousness which goes forth from the court. The verse: "Zion shall be redeemed by justice," Isaiah 1:27 in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: New Supreme Court and "The Supreme Court" in Hebrew, English and Arabic.

Edge: State emblem, "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number. Design: Jakov Enyedi. Reliefs: Kretschmer, Jerusalem. Mints: Gold and silver: Government Mint, Jerusalem; tombac: Kretschmer.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-146	1520-5704	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-146a	2520-5374	1992	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-146b	3520-5300	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

500th Anniversary of the Discovery of America, SM-147



This medal commemorates the 500th anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus on the shores of North America. "Through the Paths of the Seas" (Psalms 8,9), the voyage brought the sailor and his three boats to a discovery that changed reality forever.

Obverse: Statue of Liberty and elements associated with the New World: Edison's first electric lamp, a rocket on its way to the moon, nuclear atom, suspension bridge, plane, skyscrapers, Coca Cola bottle. "1492" in ancient type style, "1992" in modern style.

Inscription: "The New World" in Hebrew and English

Reverse: Columbus's sailing ship with its sails blown by the wind, entering the Gulf of Mexico. "Through the paths of the seas," Psalms 8,9 in Hebrew and English.

Edge: State emblem and "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number. Design: Abraham Patt; Reliefs: Kretschmer, Jerusalem; Mints: Gold medal: Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver and tombac: Kretschmer

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-147	1520-2706	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-147a	2520-2504	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-147b	3520-2302	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

Succot, SM-148



The fifth in a series of Jewish Holidays medals. Succot (Feast of Tabernacles) is known as the "Time of our Rejoicing." Succot is also the "season of the ingathering," when the harvest is brought in from the fields. The feature of this holiday is the "sukka," a temporarily built dwelling with roof of leaves or wood, which becomes the "permanent home" of the family for the week of Succot and in which the family brings four required plants: branch of palm, myrtle, willow and an the etrog, resembling a lemon.

Obverse: Four palm branches bound together in the shape of a succa and "Succot" in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: Ribbon binding four species and "You shall rejoice on your festival" in Hebrew.

Edge: Gold medal: milled. Silver and tombac show the state emblem, "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number. Design: obverse: Ehud Shafrir; reverse: Ruben Nutels. Reliefs: Kretschmer, Jerusalem. Mints: Gold and tombac: Kretschmer; silver: Government Mint, Jerusalem.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-148	1520-4596	1992	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-148a	2520-4378	1992	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-148b	3520-4184	1992	Au/750	18	4.4		\$99.00

Menachem Begin, SM-149



Menachem Begin, sixth prime minister of the State of Israel was born on August 16, 1913 in Brisk, Lithuania (then Poland) and died on March 2, 1992. During his Knesset tenure and as prime minister, Begin was a leader with principles. He initiated the historic peace process with Egypt and signed the peace treaty which brought him the Nobel Peace prize.

Obverse: Begin, his signature and "After my death I hope that I will be remembered above all, as the person who prevented civil war," and another quote, both in Hebrew.

Reverse: Star of David and a dove. "Fighters for freedom are those who hate war" in Hebrew and "Prime minister of Israel, Commander of the Irgun 1913-1922" in English.

Edge: State Emblem, metal fineness and serial number. Design: obverse: Ronit Salomon and Sharon Berman; reverse: Oswald Adler. Reliefs and Portrait Sculpture: Tidhar Dagan. Mints: Gold: Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver: Hecht; tombac: Kretschmer.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-149	1520-6700	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-149a	2520-6508	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-149b	3520-6356	1992	Au/916.6	35	30	<1,250	\$449.00

Cameo of Love, SM-150



Two beautiful creations by the artist Yosl Bergner, gently reflecting pure love and innocence. Yosl Bergner was born in Vienna in 1920, lived in and fought in World War II for Australia, moved to Paris, Canada and then settled in Israel. In 1980 he received the Israel Prize.

Obverse: Color lithograph of Yosl Bergner's painting: a clown holding flowers. The inscription: "Cameo of Love" in Hebrew and English. The artist's signature in Hebrew.

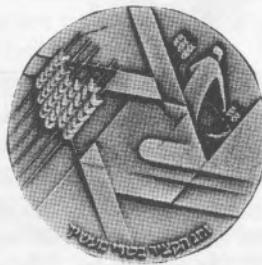
Reverse: Artwork of Yosl Bergner in relief: a clown on a wooden horse. The artist's signature in English.

Edge: "State of Israel," State Emblem, metal fineness and serial number. Relief: Tidhar Dagan.

Mints: Gold and silver 26mm: Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver 50mm and tombac: Hecht, Tel Aviv.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-150	1520-3702	1992	tombac	70	140	<3,500	\$27.00
	SM-150a	2520-3500	1992	Ag/999	50	60	<2,000	\$75.00
	SM-150b	2520-3267	1992	Ag/999	26	10	<2,000*	\$39.00
	SM-150c	3520-3382	1992	Au/916.6	38	33.93	<950	\$575.00
	SM-150d	3520-3227	1992	Au/585	22	7	<1,700*	\$135.00

Shavuot, SM-151



Sixth in a series of Jewish Holidays medals. Shavuot, the "Feast of Weeks," is one of the three festivals in which Jews make the traditional pilgrimage to the Temple. It is referred to as the "Time of the giving of our Torah (Law)" and refers to the time when the Jews left Egypt, were on the way to the Promised Land, stood before Mount Sinai and received the Torah (Bible).

Obverse: Stalk of wheat, branch of olive tree, bunch of grapes and word "Shavuot" in Hebrew and English. Also in Hebrew: "Time of the Giving of our Law."

Reverse: Field and likeness of a reaper. Shapes resembling both the blades of a combine harvester and a "Star of David." Hebrew inscription "and the feast of harvest, the first fruits of your labors."

Edge: Gold: milled. Silver and tombac show the state emblem, "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number. Design: obverse: Natan Karp; reverse: Ruben Nutels. Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan. Mints: Gold: Kretschmer; silver: Government Mint, Jerusalem; tombac: Hecht.

✓	Kagan #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-151	1520-9596	1993	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-151a	2520-9378	1993	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-151b	3520-9184	1993	Au/750	18	4.4		\$99.00

Order of the Red Banner of Labor of the Belorussian Soviet Republic

by Dmitry Markov

The Order of the Red Banner of Labor of the Belorussian S.S.R. is one of the 13 orders of labor of the old Soviet Republics. This order was instituted before unification of all awards issued within the borders of the U.S.S.R., like some other early orders and medals.

The order was instituted on November 25, 1924. The creator of the design was the sculptor T. Zmudzinski. The medal is made of silver and gold plated on both sides. Red and light red color enamels are used for the most elements of the design. The order is shaped as a triangular shield with the red banner, red star with the letters "CCCP" in the center, crossed sickle and ax (instead of the usual hammer), three ears of wheat and a gear.



The Belorussian inscription reads: Belarus Socialist Soviet Republic.
"БЕЛАРУСКАЯ САЦЫЯЛІСТЫЧНАЯ САВЕЦКАЯ РЕСПУБЛІКА"

On the top of the order another inscription reads: "Workers of the World Unite" also in Belorussian and the abbreviated name of the Republic in Polish—"BSRR" and also in Yiddish. It is because of this last detail, the Yiddish inscription, that this article came about.

The reason for such recognition of Jewish culture and its people, by the Communist government of Belorussia, can only be the presence of a large Jewish population as an indisputable fact. The scientific and cultural contributions of Jews in Russian civilization are well known. Many books have been published about Jewish Russian history and many more could be written in the future.

Belorussia is the region located between the Neman (west) and Dnieper (east) and the rivers Pripyat (south) and Dvina (north). Between the 14th and 18th centuries it was part of Poland-Lithuania, from the partitions of Poland (1772-95) until the 1917 revolution it was part of the "northwestern" region of Russia. Under Soviet rule, Belorussia became a political entity as the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

In Jewish history Belorussia is part of "Lita" (Lithuania), its Jews being known as "Litaks". According to a government census taken in 1766, there were 62,800 tax-paying Jews living in Belorussia, forming 40% of the Lithuanian Jews. In 1897, 724,548 Jews resided in Belorussia, amounting to 13.6% of the total population.

Both the wealthy and poorer Jews engaged in the development and trade of forest industries and established small and medium sized timber enterprises. They also developed leather and allied industries on a similar scale. Another Belorussian Jewish occupation was peddling, combined with the buying up of village produce such as hemp, flax and bristles which these peddlars sold to Jewish merchants who exported these commodities to the West. Because of prevailing conditions of poverty, large numbers of Belorussian Jews emigrated to the Ukraine or southern Russia, and from 1880 to the United States.

Relatively, the largest concentration of Jews in the Soviet Union was that of the Belorussian Republic. According to the census of 1926, the 407,000 Jews in Belorussia formed 8.2 % of the republic's total population. A considerable proportion of the urban population was Jewish. There were 53,686 Jews (40.8%) in Minsk; 37,645 (43.7%) in Gomel; 37,013 (37.5%) in Vitebsk; and 21,558 (42%) in Bobruisk.

The Belorussian government, in its policy to lessen the dominance of the Russian language in the towns, which was to no small extent a language used by the Jews, encouraged the promotion of Yiddish among the Jewish population. For some time the slogan 'Workers of the World Unite!' was also inscribed in Yiddish, in addition to Belorussian, Russian, and Polish, on the emblem of the Belorussian Republic.

The order was awarded to citizens of the Belorussian Republic for outstanding achievements in the socialist labor. It was presented as an award until early nineteen thirties. The exact number of these awards of The Red Banner of Labor of the Belorussian Soviet Republic is unknown to the author, but has been conservatively estimated to be approximately 180. The specimen that is in my possession has an engraved number 20. As with the custom of such items, the order has the hallmark "84" certifying to the finest of the silver.. Tzarist hallmarks were used by Russian jewelry factories until 1926. The order is also hallmarked -"BB" (master's initials).

The greatest significance of the order is that it is the only award in the history of the Imperial Russia or U.S.S.R. that contains a Jewish inscription thus recognizing its Jewish citizens.

The ALEPH BETH Page

... Dedicated to the Beginner

by Edward Janis

Q. I received a catalog that has a coin, which I believe fits into a series of coins that I collect. I like "founder" coins struck in the Roman provincial cities when they became elevated to colony status. The description says AE27; head of Tiberius on obverse; a bull on the reverse and struck in Thrace. My questions are 1) what does AE27 mean and 2) Is this a "founder" coin?

A.S., N.Y., N.Y.

A. A coin from Thrace such as you described is not to be found in Sear's "Greek Imperial Coins" a catalog of the local coinages of the Ottoman Empire. This is not a corpus but only a general outline. Thrace is an area that had Macedonia on its west, the Black Sea on the east, and the Aegean on its south. Technically it was considered to be part of the Balkans. I do not have any of the detailed numismatic books of the area. There were hundreds of ancient Greek and Roman coins that had bulls on their reverses. However "founder" coins pictured two or more domesticated bulls called oxen, shown wearing a yoke and being driven by a personification of the Emperor or a priest and plowing the perimeter of the now elevated area into a Colonia. Within these borders local residents had an equal status with a citizen of Rome and could even take his grievances to a court in Rome.

In Sear's, under Tiberius who ruled 14-37 CE we see on p.23 photos of two coins struck in the Spanish towns of Gracurris and Caesar Augusta. The former has a bull facing right. The latter shows a priest plowing left with a pair of oxen. Only this piece is a "founder" piece of Tiberius. I will check Cohen and Heiss at the A.N.S. for "founder" pieces of Tiberius struck in Thracia.

The abbreviation AE describes an ancient coin that is made from copper, either in pure state or mixed with other base metals such as tin or zinc, but never gold or silver. If a coin contains 90% copper and 10% tin, it is lighter in color and it is called bronze. The abbreviation is derived from the Latin AES which meant metal not containing any gold or silver. Therefor, AE27 means a copper or bronze coin that is 27mm. in diameter.



Trujillo's Jews by Sue Fishkoff

FROM THE JERUSALEM POST

The Jewish history of the Dominican Republic began soon after 1492, when Christopher Columbus established Santo Domingo as the first European colony in if the New World. Historians say that several members of his crew were most probably conversos, Jews who converted to Christianity to avoid persecution by the Inquisition. Sephardi Jews continued to trickle into Santo Domingo through the late 18th and 19th centuries, many coming from Curacao and other Caribbean islands. A descendant of this group was Max Henriques Urena, who, as the Dominican ambassador to the United Nations, delivered the speech welcoming Israel to that organization in 1949. The largest single Jewish immigration to the island were the 645 that arrived from 1940 to 1945 on Trujillo's invitation. Today there are about 300 Jews in the Dominican Republic. Besides the 70 or so left in Sosua, there are descendants of the Sephardi immigration, some European Jews and a smattering of Israeli entrepreneurs living in Santo Domingo. Relations have always been smooth with the larger, non-Jewish society, but intermarriage is high. There are 27 Cohens listed in the Santo Domingo phonebook, but none are Jewish.

On August 12, 1994, the remnants of the Jewish community of Sosua, a tiny seacoast town in the Dominican Republic, wrote a heart-felt letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, begging him not to close the Israeli embassy in their country.

Fifty-four years ago, the letter begins, this Caribbean nation, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti, opened its arms to the threatened Jews of Europe at a time when the rest of the world turned its back. The drama began in 1938 at an international conference held at Evian-les-Bains, France, where nation after nation explained why they could not accept any more of the 650,000 Jews living in Nazi-occupied Germany and Austria. Even the United States refused to increase its quota. Only the representative of the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo stepped forward, offering safe haven for up to 100,000 European Jews on this lush Caribbean island.

Between 1940 and 1945, just 645 Jews had made their way to the Dominican Republic. But 5,000 Dominican visas had been issued, each one representing a life that was saved from the Holocaust, as its bearer used the visa to exit Nazi-occupied Europe.

The refugees that managed to get to the Dominican Republic settled in Sosua, a planned community Trujillo established on jungle land, with funding provided by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Today, about 30 of those original Jewish families still remain in Sosua.

This past summer, the community was shocked to learn that the Government of Israel planned to close its embassies in the Dominican

Republic, Bolivia, Paraguay and Honduras as part of cost-cutting measures. In mid-August, a Foreign Ministry mission visited the Dominican capital of Santo Domingo to inform the government that the Israeli embassy would stay open if the Dominican Republic agreed to move its embassy in Israel from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem. The pressure apparently worked. On August 12, the very day the Jews of Sosua were penning their letter to Rabin, the Dominican Republic announced plans to relocate its embassy to Jerusalem, a move clearly designed to forestall Israel's closure of its Santo Domingo embassy. For now, however all plans are on hold. The Dominican embassy remains in Tel-Aviv and as of now, there are no plans to close the Israeli embassy in Santo Domingo.

The political wrangling seems petty to the Jews of Sosua, who plead with Rabin in their letter to overlook "this nonsensical dispute and maintain an Israeli presence on their island. Does it really matter where the offices of the Dominican Government are in Israel they ask? Is it not more important that Israel be diplomatically represented here?"

The letter points out that Sosua, "the little town of the Jews," has become a tourist attraction in the last decade, telling its tale to thousands of foreign visitors, particularly from Germany. "More important," the letter continues, "54 years ago, it was the only safe haven that welcomed 645 Holocaust Jews with open arms. In a world filled with strife it is most important to remember that people forget too fast and too easily."

Sosua is undoubtedly the only town in the world settled entirely by Jews fleeing the Holocaust. On Trujillo's orders, every new Jewish settler was given 80 acres of land, 10 cows, a mule and a horse - quite a generous immigration package by anyone's estimation. However, Trujillo's "generosity," according to numerous sources, stemmed mainly from his eagerness to have the Western nations, particularly the US, overlook his regime's brutal massacre of 25,000 Haitians in 1937. The Dominican strongman, who led his country from 1930 until his assassination in 1961, was also apparently eager to "whiten" his race. He believed the influx of young, mostly single, male Europeans would marry Dominican women and produce light-skinned children.

Indeed most of the Jewish refugees who arrived were single young men, who did marry Dominican women. The children of these mixed marriages usually considered themselves Jewish. Many stayed in Sosua over the years, where they proudly sport Stars of David around their necks.

Most of Sosua's settlers were German or Austrian Jews, with a large sprinkling from Luxembourg, Switzerland and even Shanghai. German was spoken in every home, often mixed with Spanish, especially in the intermarried families. These were city-born Jews, professionals and craftsmen, ill-suited to the new agricultural life they were offered in the wilds of Sosua. What they faced when they got

here was "Nada! Nothing, A jungle. People lived in barracks. Life in Israel at the time was a lot more 'civilized' than in Sosua. But the settlers were a hardy lot. They built homes and cultivated vegetables, living kibbutz-style in the early years. Soon, on the advice of two experts sent the Joint Distribution Committee, the settlers turned from agriculture to dairy production, establishing a successful Jewish cooperative concern -Productos Sosua - that today produces most of the country's meat and dairy produce.

The urban settlers maintained their European life-styles as well as they could. Not only did they continue to speak German among themselves, but one of the first commercial enterprises built was a Viennese-style restaurant, The Cafe Stokman.

By the late 1940s, most of Sosua's Jews had moved on to Miami or New York, where they maintain close-knit communities to this day. Until 1980, the town was almost entirely Jewish. That year, the international Puerto Plata airport opened four miles to the west, turning the sleepy village into a major beach resort. Those Jews who remained in Sosua through the years, holding onto their land soon found their original 80 acres had turned into goldmines.

The town's synagogue is functioning, with services held every other Shabbat and on the High Holidays. Pessah seders are held in private homes on a rotating basis, and the annual Purim carnival is a major community event. The Jewish community also maintains a small museum to preserve the story of the town's original Jewish settlers, largely through snapshots from private collections. It was dedicated in 1990, the year Sosua celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Rafael Leonidas Trujillo was the Dominican Republic's strongman from 1930 to 1961, serving as president from 1930 to 1938, and from 1942 to 1951 when he was assassinated. His reign was cruel and despotic. He did however bring public order and stability to the island. But most importantly, his was the only nation in the world that provided affirmative action to the Jewish refugee problem.

The numismatic illustration is a One Peso Dominican Republic coin of 1955 issued to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Trujillo regime.



Mis-Strikes & Mis-prints

By Shmuel Aviezer

In the course of the automatic striking of coins, some technical malfunction could create faulty coins. These are generally sorted out in the control stage. Yet, few might escape the rigid scrutiny and pass through into circulation, to the exalting contentment of collectors who treat them as unique items worth manifold their face value.

We hereby describe some of these mis-strokes:

1. WEAK IMPRINT. When less than the maximum pressure of the press is applied, the design will not be sharp enough. A possible reason: a thinner blank than the standard one.
2. PARTIAL STRIKE. The blank tarries in stationing in its hole in the press and receives only partial strike.
3. DOUBLE STRIKE. The struck coin moves slowly out of the hole and thus gets another (mostly partial) strike (its succeeding blank gets a different partial strike).
4. STRIKING A FAULTY BLANK. The blank fed into the press might be cracked, bent or incised in the edge, resulting in a deformed shape.
5. STRIKING ON A SMALLER BLANK. A blank of smaller diameter than the coin in production may infiltrate in the bulk fed into the machine, consequently creating a coin that depicts the central part of the design without the elements close to the round edge.
6. ONE-SIDED STRIKE. Two blanks, if thinner than prescribed might join together and station themselves in the hole when the upper one will get upper-side imprint and the lower one will have the lower side imprint. Leaving the press, there will be two coins, each struck on one side only, each with a different side.
7. "MONSTER" STRIKE. On very rare occasions, feeding blanks into the press goes astray and few get stuck, which brings the machine to stop. While probing the hurdle, one or two blanks might pop up, their form entirely distorted. These are very unique coins and their unintentional "monstrous" shape could be quite impressive.

Misprints in banknotes are those flaws that may occur in the course of the original process of printing the banknotes, resulting from some technical malfunction. Printers apply stringent procedures to sift spoiled banknotes from the finished product and prevent their infiltration among the good ones. The presence of such faulty banknotes in circulation does no merit neither to the printer nor to the issuing authority. Moreover, an originally misprinted banknote is a delight to behold, especially for the greedy eyes of the collectors, and naturally its worth immediately becomes far beyond its face value.

Hereafter are some forms of the misprints created in the original line of production, to differentiate them from "faked" ones, fabricated by forgers on good banknotes already in circulation:

1. ABSENCE OF INTAGLIO IMPRINT. As known, intaglio is the printing system that is used to print the embossed portions of the banknote such as inscriptions, portrait, structures and the kind. In the conventional process of printing, applying intaglio on a banknote comes in a separate run, first on the back and then on the front; all, after printing the flat offset sections on both sides of the banknote, comprising mainly the background patterns. At a rare phase of technical mishap, two sheets join together in passing through the machine, so that the lower sheet does not get the intaglio print. A very remote coincidence should follow when the quality control staff, or automatic sorting instruments, fail to remove the faulty sheet and subsequently it proceeds to be cut and packed in the bundles of the fit notes, directly into circulation.

2. ABSENCE OF OFFSET IMPRINT. In the process of offset printing, both sides of the banknote are printed simultaneously. If, by accident, two sheets roll in one, the upper sheet will get the print on the front only while the lower sheet will have only the back printed. When the sheets are subsequently passed through the intaglio machines, there result sheets with intaglio print lacking offset backgrounds.

3. UNMATCHED NUMBERING. On every banknote there usually are two locations for numbering: on the left and on the right; this, in order to safeguard the identity of the banknote when replacement is necessary if burnt or torn. Numbering can be applied on the front or the back. In a malfunction of numbering machine one number may not be identical to the other, in one or more digits.

4. INK SMEARING. In rare cases, the ink does not dry instantly as it should, resulting in smearing the following sheet, in mirror print, with the wet portions.

5. PARTIAL PRINT AND OVERPRINT. The sheet may fold in part, especially in the corners as a sequel, the upper corner banknote will have partial print while the next unfolded sheet will have an overprint in the same location. If not trapped in the control stage, the unfit banknote will pass on to the cutting and packing facilities undetected.

6. TAIL FORMATION. Between the quality control and the cutting functions, a sheet might fold in the corner. When cut, the resulting folded banknote will continue to lump together with the good banknotes in the packed bundle and flow unhindered into circulation, when its concealed tail will finally stretch.

The above are realistic reasons of how mis-strikes on coins and mis-prints on paper money can occur. Collectors, however, should be wary of all "error material" as much has been created solely for monetary gain.

The Moses Levy Esq. Mystery by Edward Schuman

Several years ago, the writer received a list of early American fiscal documents from a Washington, D.C. dealer. In browsing through the list, one item of interest was noted, a hand written document addressed to Moses Levy, Esq. of Philadelphia. Since Moses Levy had to be Jewish, without knowing more, the item was purchased.

I thought it was the New York/Philadelphia Jewish merchant Moses Levy, of whom much has been written about in early Jewish colonial history as many documents on the dealers list were of shipping, cargo manifest and customs nature. However I soon found out that this Moses Levy had died many years prior to the date of my document.

Realizing that the word "Esq." after the name meant that the Moses Levy on this document was a lawyer enabled the correct Moses Levy to be identified.

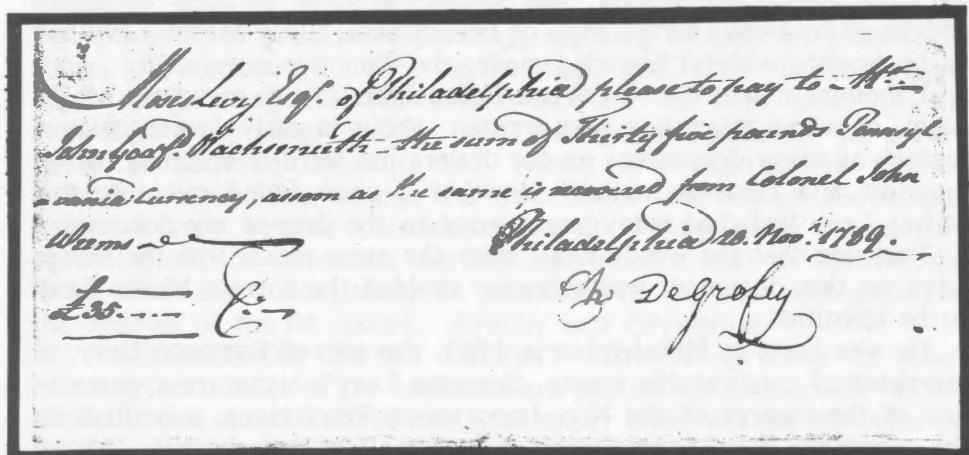
He was born in Philadelphia in 1757, the son of Sampson Levy, a merchant of considerable means. Sampson Levy's signature appears as one of the signers of the Non-Importation Resolutions, a petition to the crown for relief from excessive customs fees and charges. Moses entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1769 and was one of the three graduates of the class of 1772. It should be noted that in the eight year period from 1760-1768 there were only six Jews enrolled at the Academy and College.

He was the most prominent early Jewish graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. He was admitted to the bar in 1778 and achieved prominence in his profession as one of the most outstanding lawyers of Philadelphia. He was one of the defense counsel in the trial of Benjamin Franklin Bache, editor of the anti-federalist "Aurora", for "libeling the President and the Executive Government in a manner tending to excite sedition and opposition to the laws." He was a member of the legislature and held other posts until 1822, when he became a presiding judge in the Philadelphia District Court, a post he held for three years. In 1802, he was appointed a trustee of his alma mater, a position he occupied until his death in 1826.

Moses Levy acquired such considerable reputation in the legal profession that Thomas Jefferson considered him for the position of Attorney-General in his second cabinet. Jefferson asked Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, to fully inquire into the legal knowledge, judgment, and moral and social character of Moses Levy.

Gallatin answered that he had found it rather difficult to obtain much information about Moses Levy. In a Treasury Department letter address to Jefferson from Gallatin dated September 18th, 1804, he wrote "as a lawyer, he is superior to Dickerson, and would I presume, do tolerably; still he is but second rate, and as a statesman, and in some degree member of your cabinet, I do not think he would do. Nor if his practice be as it is presumably worth six or seven thousand

dollars, it is probably that he would give it up for the place of Attorney General, and exchange Philadelphia for Washington." It may also have been Moses Levy's newly acquired conservatism which cooled Gallatin's judgment.



The numismatic item text reads as follows: *Moses Levy, Esq. of Philadelphia. please pay to Mr. John Goaf(?) Wachsmith - the sum of Thirty Five pounds Pennsylvania Currency as soon as the same is recovered from Colonel John Weems. Philadelphia 20 Nov. 1789 signed Ch. DeGrafey.*

The writer was unable to obtain any information on either Colonel Weems or Ch. DeGrafey. Neither are listed in Appleton's Cyclopedias of American Biography.

In "The History of the Jews of Philadelphia, from Colonial times to the Age of Jackson," the authors, Edwin Wolf II and Maxwell Whiteman note that this Moses Levy was not a practicing Jew, though born Jewish and circumcised in the Jewish faith. They refer to him and his brother as the "Episcopalian Levy brothers," who remained Jews in the mind of the entire community. They quote a story, written much later about an event of this period which shows how prevalent this opinion was.

"About fifty years ago, there was an eccentric lawyer in Philadelphia named William S. Blair. On one occasion, he and Moses Levy Esq. who was of Hebrew origin tho' a Christian by profession, were opposed to each other in a case. Blair, having made a mumbling speech, Levy in his reply said that the counsel's oration reminded him of an epic poem which begins in the middle. Blair in the concluding speech said that tho' his learned friend had likened him to the author of an Epic poem, he could not perceive any resemblance between himself and Homer, but that the Jury would probably agree with him in likening his learned friend's argument to the Hebrew, which begins at the later end."

ASSER LEVY

by Louis Hühner

reprinted from THE JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA published in 1903

Asser Levy, also known as Asser Levy Van Swellen, was one of the first Jewish settlers of New Amsterdam, as New York City was known under the Dutch rule. He was probably born in Amsterdam, Holland. He is first mentioned as one of the first Jews who went to New Netherlands in 1654, probably as refugees from Brazil.

From the start Levy was one of the champions of his people, never permitting an injury, no matter how slight to pass without protest. In 1655 Peter Stuyvesant, the governor of the colony, was ordered to attack the Swedes on the Delaware, and accordingly issued orders for the enlistment of all adults. Several Jews, among whom was Asser Levy, appear to have been ready to serve, but the governor and council passed an ordinance that "Jews can not be permitted to serve as soldiers but shall instead pay a monthly contribution for the exemption."

Levy and his comrades at once refused to pay and on Nov. 5, 1655 he petitioned for leave to stand guard like other burghers or to be relieved from the tax. His petition was rejected with the comment that if the petitioners were not satisfied with the law they might go elsewhere. Levy successfully appealed to Holland and was subsequently permitted to do guard duty like other citizens.

Asser Levy appears also as a prominent trader at Fort Orange (Albany) and it is likely that he was responsible for the rebuke given to Stuyvesant by the directors in Holland during the same year because of his refusal to permit Jews to trade there.

Levy was also one of the first licensed butchers in the colony. In 1657 the burgher right was made absolutely essential for certain trading privileges, and within two days of a notice to that effect, Asser Levy appeared in court requesting to be admitted in the colony as a burgher.

The officials expressed their surprise at such a request. The record reads: "The Jew claims that such ought not to be refused him as he keeps watch like other burghers, showing a certificate from the city of Amsterdam attesting that there a Jew is a burgher." The application was denied and Levy at once brought the matter before Stuyvesant and the council which mindful of the previous experience ordered that Jews should be admitted as burghers on April 21 1657.

As early as 1661 Levy purchased real estate at Albany. He was also the earliest Jewish owner of real estate in New York City with his transactions there commencing in June 1662 with the purchase of land on South William Street. Within ten years of his arrival Levy had become a man of consequence. In 1664 the wealthiest inhabitants were summoned to lend the city money for fortifications against the English. He was the only Jew to lend the city 100 Florins.

It is as a litigant however that Asser Levy figures mostly in the Dutch records with his name often appearing for days in succession. He invariably argued his own cases and was almost invariably successful. Only on two or three occasions did he figure as a defendant. No other Jew seems to have had so many dealings with Christians or to have been on more intimate terms with them. As a litigant he is named also in the records of Gravesend in 1674. Levy's trading relations extended to New England and he frequently appeared as attorney for merchants in Holland. In 1671 he lent the money for building the first Lutheran church in New York. About 1678 he built a slaughter-house in the east end of what is now known as Wall Street, where he appears to have been the owner of a famous tavern.

Instead of being unpopular on account of his many lawsuits, the contrary seems to have been the case. The confidence reposed in his honesty by his Christian fellow citizens appears frequently from the court records. Property in litigation was put in his custody and he is named as executor in the wills of Christian merchants and figures as both administrator and trustee in colonial records. His influence was not confined to New York.

In the colonial records of Connecticut he appears as intervening to obtain the remission of a fine imposed upon a Jew there. The court remitted the fine with the comment that it did so "as a token of its respect to Mr. Asser Levy."

This great early colonial Jewish American died in 1682. He left a considerable estate over which there was a long legal contest.



The name of Asser Levy has been memorialized on a medal sculpted by A.I.N.A member Karen Worth for "The Medallic History of the Jews in America." series which was issued by the Franklin Mint in 1971 on behalf of the Judaic Heritage Society. The medal serves as the numismatic illustration for this article.

In Tribute to Moses by Reuven Kashani

Jewish legend, *aggada*, tells how Moses was born and died on the seventh day of the Hebrew month of Adar. Commentators on the Torah note that the distinguished and the innocent die on their birthdays, thereby completing the cycle of their lives. Christian and Arabic literature also note a number of great leaders who have died on the date of their birth.

Following the Hebrew calendar, Moses' death coincides with the week of the Torah portion *Tetzaveh*, in the book of Exodus. Moses' name is not mentioned or noted explicitly in this portion at all, with one explanation being that at the time of the golden calf episode, Moses said to God: "Blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written" (Exodus 33:32).

There are numerous responses given to why the location of Moses' grave was not made known. Among them: so that a sanctuary should not be built on his grave from which sacrifices and offerings be made; so that it should not be desecrated by the nations of the world; and that the people of Israel should not see his place of death as a legacy and neglect the Promised Land. According to another version, Moses, who did not see the Promised Land in his own lifetime, is destined to have that privilege following his death; and he will lead all those who died outside the Land of Israel as they enter it with him.

After Israel's establishment, the seventh of Adar was set as Memorial Day for the fallen soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces whose places of burial, like that of Moses, are unknown. Ceremonies of solidarity are held to recall the memory of missing soldiers and those who drowned at sea.

Tradition in certain places called for study sessions to be conducted to exalt the souls of the dead on this date. The Kabbalist sages used to visit the graves of the righteous and pray for the people of Israel and "to establish the divine presence from dust" by the grace of Moses.

Over the generations special compilations of prayers have also been composed for the seventh of Adar, which include readings in Moses' honor. In the introduction of the *Seder and Tikkun of the Seventh of Adar*, printed in Mantua in the 18th century, it is written: "We have compiled the verses in which the name of God was alluded to in various phrases, initials and final letter acronyms, and the combinations add up to the number of the sum of the letters in Moses' name."

In the Middle Ages, the Jews of Egypt conducted their prayers in the *Knesset Musa*, Moses' Synagogue, near Cairo. According to tradition among Egyptian Jews, this synagogue is located at the place Moses resided before God sent him to speak to Pharaoh and take the people of Israel out of Egypt.

According to some, the synagogue was built about 40 years after the destruction of the Second Temple. The Jews of Egypt would visit this synagogue on the seventh of Adar and commemorate in prayer the memory of the death of Moses. They turned the following day, however, into one of feasting and rejoicing- the *ziara*. In order to prevent the profanation of God's name in what was considered a sacred place, the end of the Middle Ages saw various reforms (*takanot*) legislated, which defined and delineated the degree of merry-making during the *ziara* - no plays, no chess-playing, no song or dance, no un-accompanied women except for the elderly, no intermingling of men with women or men with young boys. Over time the custom of gathering at the *Knesset Musa* on the day of Moses' death was discontinued, and so were the subsequent festivities.

Over the course of generations, the seventh of Adar also became a day devoted to the *hevra kadisha*, the group of individuals who are responsible for burial rites. The group's dues collectors (*gabbais*) would fast and say prayers of repentance, after which a feast was held for the entire *hevra kadisha*.

The illustrated Moses' medals are as follows

- A) Moses Medal thought to originate in the 1500's. Cast Bronze. Obv. Moses portrait left. Reverse: 2nd commandment. "Thou Shalt Not Have Other GODS Before Me".
- B) 18th Century Ten Commandments Medal. Moses kneeling right, receiving Commandments. Three cherub faces before him, trumpets projecting from the clouds above Hebrew camp in the background. Rev. Tablets of the Law, serpent and apple beneath.
- C) 1800's Silver medal by Loos. It depicts a seated Moses with the Ten Commandments and the 5th Commandment near the edge. The reverse shows a horn of plenty with fruits and money.



B

C

The United Jewish Friendly Society Medal by Edward Schuman

As early as 1840, when the blood accusation was revived with regard to the Damascus affair, and Jewish matters were for the first time treated on as an international basis, the Jews of England took by far the most prominent position in the general protest of the European Jewry against the charge. The Board of Deputies at London was the sole Jewish body in Europe to hold public meetings in response to the affair. However a meeting of protest was held by eminent Christians at the Mansion House, London, on July 3, 1840, which formed a precedent for further distinguished gatherings.

When in 1881 the outburst of violence in Russia brought the position of Russian Jews prominently before the world, it was their coreligionists in England who took the lead in organizing measures for their relief.

It was during these periods that English societies were founded to show support for the amelioration of the conditions of the persecuted Jews. One of these was named "United Jewish Friendly Society", which is presumed to be founded by Christian people.

The illustrated medal appeared as item 556 in the Leo Better auction which took place in Yaffo, Israel on March 12th 1974. It was described as an impressive pendant weighing 32gr. of 9 kt. gold.

The item consists of a Star of David, set into a circular rim. On the flat side of the rim are the words *United Jewish Friendly Society* incused in a semi-circle with an ornamental scroll at the lower portion. On one of the triangles which form the Star of David are the words *Brotherly Love, Harmony* and *Benevolence*. A banner is woven around the star bearing the words *Loyalty, Fidelity*, and *Benevolence*. The meaning of the letters GS which appear in the center of the star are not known. The circle is set into a gold filigree mounting with ribbon attached for suspension. There is an additional piece which is attached a lower part of the mounting consisting of two crossed feather plumes, as commonly used in this era for writing purposes.

The writer is unable to obtain any other information about the United Jewish Friendly Society, or this pendant.



The Edict of Toleration by Prof. Adolph Buchler

During the reign of Queen Maria Theresa (1740-1780), a toleration tax was imposed upon the Jews of Hungary. On September 1, 1749, delegates of the Hungarian Jews met a royal commission in the City of Presburg, which informed them that they would be expelled from the country if they did not pay this tax. The frightened Jews at once agreed to do so; and the commission then demanded a yearly tax of 50,000 gulden. This sum being exorbitant, the delegates protested; and although the Queen had fixed 30,000 gulden as the minimum tax, they were finally able to compromise on the payment of 20,000 gulden a year for a period of eight years. The delegates were to apportion this amount among the districts; the districts their respective sums amongst the communities; and the communities, theirs among the individual members. The Queen confirmed this agreement of the commission, except the eight year clause, changing the period to three years, which subsequently she made five years. The agreement, thus ratified by the Queen, was brought on November 26th before the courts which were powerless to relieve the Jews from the payment of this "Malkegeld" (queen's money), as they called it.

The Jews, thus burdened by new taxes, thought the time ripe for taking steps to remove their oppressive disabilities. While still at Presburg, the delegates had brought their grievances before the mixed commission that was called "*delegata in puncto tolerantialis taxae et gravaminum Judeorum commissio mixta*." These complaints pictured the distress of the Jews of that time.

They were not allowed to live in Croatia and Slavonia, in counties of Baranya and Heves, or in several free towns and localities; nor might they visit the markets there. At Stuhlweissenburg they had to pay a poll-tax of 1 gulden, 30 kreuzer if they entered the city during the day, even if only for an hour. In many places they might not even stay over-night. They therefore begged permission to settle, or at least to visit the fairs in Croatia and Slavonia and in those places from which they had been driven in consequence of the jealousy of the Greeks and the merchants. They had also to pay heavier bridge and ferry-tolls than the Christians; at Tyrnau they had to pay three times the ordinary sum, namely, for the driver, for the vehicle, and for the animal drawing the same; and in three villages belonging to the same district they had to pay toll, although there was no toll-gate. Jews living on the estates of the nobles had to give their wives and children as pledges for arrears of taxes. In Upper Hungary they asked for the revocation of the toleration-tax imposed by the chamber of Zips (Szepes), on the ground that otherwise the Jews living there would have to pay two such taxes; and they asked also to be relieved from a similar tax paid to the Diet. Finally, they asked that Jewish artisans might be allowed to follow their trades in their homes undisturbed.

The commission laid these complaints before the queen, indicating the manner in which the evils could be relieved; and their suggestions were dictated in a rare spirit of good-will. The queen relieved the Jews from the tax of toleration in Upper Hungary only. In regard to the other complaints she ordered that the Jews should specify them in detail, and that the government should remedy them in so far as they came under its jurisdiction.

The toleration-tax had hardly been instituted when Michael Hirsch petitioned the government to be appointed primate of the Hungarian Jews in order to be able to settle difficulties that might arise among them, and to collect the tax. The government did not recommend Hirsch, but decided that in case the Jews should refuse to pay, it might be advisable to appoint a primate to adjust the matter.

Before the end of the period of five years the delegates of the Jews again met the commission at Presburg and offered to increase the amount of their tax to 25,000 gulden a year if the queen would promise that it should remain at that sum for the next ten years. The queen refused; and not only did she turn a deaf ear to the renewed gravamina of the Jews, but caused still heavier burdens to be imposed upon them. Their tax of 20,000 gulden was to be increased to 30,000 gulden in 1760; to 50,000 in 1772; to 80,000 in 1778; and to 160,000 in 1813.

Joseph II (1780-90), son and successor of Maria Theresa, showed immediately on his accession that he intended to alleviate the condition of the Jews communicating this intention to the Hungarian Chancellor, Count Franz Esterhazy as early as May 13, 1781. In consequence, the Hungarian government issued (March 31, 1783) a decree known as the "systematic agentis Judaicae regulatio," which wiped out at one stroke the degrees that had oppressed the Jews for centuries.

The royal free towns, except the mining-towns, were opened to the Jews, who were allowed to settle at pleasure throughout the country. The "regulatio" decreed that the legal documents of the Jews should no longer be composed in Hebrew, or in the corrupt Judao-German, but in Latin, German, and Hungarian, the languages currently used in the country, and which the young Jews were required to learn within two years. Documents written in Hebrew or in Judao-German were not legal; Hebrew books were to be used at worship only; the Jews were to organize elementary schools; the commands of the emperor, issued in the interests of the Jews, were to be announced in the synagogues; and the rabbis were to explain to the people the salutary effects of these degrees. The subjects to be taught in the Jewish schools were to be the same as those taught in the national schools; the same textbooks were to be used in all the elementary schools; and everything that might offend the religious sentiment of non-conformists was to be omitted. During the early years Christian teachers were to be employed in the Jewish schools, but they were to have nothing to do with the religious affairs of such institutions.

After the lapse of ten years a Jew might establish a business, or engage in trade, only if he could prove that he had attended a school. The usual school inspectors were to supervise the Jewish schools and to report to the government. The Jews were to create a fund for organizing and maintaining their schools. Jewish youth might enter the academies and might study any subject at universities except theology.

Jews might rent farms only if they could cultivate the same without the aid of Christians. They were allowed to peddle and to engage in various industrial occupations, and to be admitted into the guilds. They were also permitted to engrave seals, and to sell gunpowder and saltpeter; but their exclusion from the mining-towns remained in force. Christian masters were allowed to have Jewish apprentices. All distinctive marks hitherto worn by the Jews were to be abolished, and they might even carry swords. On the other hand, they were required to discard the distinctive marks prescribed by their religion and to shave their beards. Emperor Joseph regarded this decree so seriously that he allowed no one to violate it.

The Jews, in a petition dated April 22, 1783, expressed their gratitude to the emperor for his favors, and, reminding him of his principle that religion should not be interfered with, asked permission to wear beards. The emperor granted the prayer of the petitioners, but reaffirmed the other parts of the decree.



Several medals were struck in commemoration of this event. The first, issued in 1781 has the bust of the Emperor on the obverse and is inscribed in Latin, "Love, and Delight of the Human Race." The reverse shows a memorial with a figure pointing out the words in Latin: "Religious Liberty from Joseph II in his Lands to Protestants and Jews 1781." Around and on top of it is stated in large Latin letters, "Who Commands that All Live Fully." Other medals are variants of the above design with different wordings.

It may be added that immediately after the death of Joseph II, the former restrictions upon the Jews were again reimposed.



CLUB BULLETIN

DONNA J. SIMS N.L.C.

Editor

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INS OF LONG ISLAND - The annual Chanuka party was another rounding success, with great food and company. Exhibit topics for the December meeting were: ghetto uprising, 1971 Let My People Go coin, Jewish art, and new acquisitions.

ISRAEL COIN CLUB OF LOS ANGELES - Due to circumstances beyond control, the October meeting was cancelled at the last minute. The December meeting was the annual holiday festivities with pot luck and a special program provided by Sally Marx; "Traveling Down the Past" was her subject.

INS OF LOS ANGELES - The December Hannuka/Xmas party was held with a catered buffet the highlight of the evening to a roomful of attendees (I finally was able to attend a meeting). With very special exhibits and doorprizes being featured, the special event was topped off with the Coin-O game of Paul Borack. The AINA slide program entitled "Paper Money of Israel," was shown at the January meeting. This program had originally been scheduled for the November meeting but arrived late, so was rescheduled for January. Stepping in at the last minute with a program for November was Walter Ostromecki with a slide presentation on mis-struck U.S. coins.

INS OF MASSACHUSETTS - Thirty-seven members and friends attended the annual dinner, this one being very special as it was a celebration of 25 years as a club. Special guests were Moe Weinschel and Dan Kyram, Israel Consul General. Lou Green was honored as being the club treasurer for all of the 25 years. The next meeting will be in March, as there are no meetings in January and February.

INS OF MICHIGAN - Member Ed Blau gave an in-depth comprehensive presentation of his recent stay in Israel. His entire family of ten, including grandchildren, went along in a van, with driver, for eleven days. His program included videos, displaying items purchased there, and details of staying on a kibbutz.

INS OF NEW YORK - Exhibit and discussion topics for the December meeting were: 5 agorot, all bronze coins of the First Revolt, 1955 one pound paper, 1969 Shalom coin, Rubenstein/Diamond Industry medals, and December 15, Asarah b'Tevet (the 10th day of Tevet) for miscellaneous. For January: 10 agorot, non-Jewish coins of the Old and New Testament, 1955 five pound paper, 1970 Mikvah commem, Stockade and Ghetto Uprising medal, and January 16, Tu b'Shevat (the 15th day of Shevat) for miscellaneous.

WESTCHESTER ISRAEL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY - The study topic for the December meeting was reproduction of coins and medals on coins and medals (the Israel Liberata as an example). The January meeting saw the start of the fourth go-around of the study cycle on Jewish numismatics; from the earliest beginnings to the present. Members noted that their recent concluded study cycle had begun exactly three years ago. For this meeting, the first in the new cycle, the specific study era included: Philisto-Arabic coins of Gaza - imitation Athenian tetradrachms and obols, Yehud and Yehezkel coins - Persian coins, the coins of Samaria and the coins of Alexander the Great minted in the Holy Land.

RE THE 1995 AINA TOUR - If you did not sign up to go, this is what you missed: Tiberias, Jerusalem, Petra, Eilat, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Nazareth, Massada, the Dead Sea, Jaffa, Aqaba, Galilee, Beer Sheva, Jaffa, a variety of museums, digs, the Judean desert, and most of all, the famous Israeli breakfasts. The tour should be happening as this issue goes to print and distribution. (Wish I were with them).

COMMENTS FROM DJS - Correspondence received from San Diego and Laguna Hills is being responded to at the completion of this column. I will be waiting to hear all the stories of the tour. Be well, be happy. . . .

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